M 101 does not exclude the possibility of a distant kinship, but the present 563 state of our knowledge makes the solution to this question impossible; for very close resemblances may be explained by a common origin as well as by a period of living in close contact, and differences may be due to diverse origins [5] or to a temporary separation at a certain point in history.

P M 101 563 144 A considerable number of Pygmoids or Pygmiforms (1) (Batswá, Jõfe, Balũmbe, Bilãngi, Bondé) are to be found scattered among the Nkundó. They share a community of social and economic interests with their "masters." The Botswá belongs to his master and depends on him, but he is not, strictly speaking, his slave. His master not only has rights over him; he also has obligations to fulfill. Most of the Pygmoids are to be found in the western part of Nkundó territory; in the east they are very rare.

1. This name was proposed by Father Schebesta, op. cit., p. 170.

M 101 173 The Nkundó-Mõngo came from the north or northeast, while the Mbõlé claim to have come from the northwest, and the Bakutu from the west. (2)

2. See my study, previously cited, passim.

M 101 A word should be said about the name of these people. Ordinarily, we call them the Nkundó-Mõngo. The first of these names is used in the west and in the south, the second especially in the north and in the east. The Elãngá of the Losanganya region are called the Mongo ɗâ Lolo, or the Upstream Mõngo, by the peoples to the west of them. Foreigners call all these peoples, including the Nkundó, the Mbõlé, the Bakutu, etc., by the name of Mõngo. In literature one sometimes encounters the name of Lolo or Balolo. (3) But, as we have

3. For example, the name of the Protestant mission of the Lulonga is "Congo Balolo Mission."

seen, lolo is not a proper noun but simply the word meaning "upstream"

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[825]

recollection of an animal of the leopard family which they call bokonga. Their description of it corresponds to the lion. Some soldiers and other expatriates, who were also young people, shown representations of a lion immediately identified it with their bokonga.

The groups under discussion here lived for a time on the banks of the Luwo (Maringa) and the [11] upper Ikelemba, (1) then under

[173]

1. It appears that between the Ikelemba and its tributary the Losilifa, there is still a bonkom tree called w'ãmenga (of bald heads) under which, according to tradition, the ancestors held their councils. Nearby there is a bosãã whose fruits never ripen.

pressure from other Mõngo tribes, they crossed the Tshuapa-Ruki. They evicted the Ekonda and settled in their present location. This exodus must have taken place a fairly long time ago; it is impossible to determine the date and difficult to make any estimates. In any case it must have occurred 150 to 200 years ago.

241 These peoples are primarily farmers; they grow chiefly bananas, manioc, yams, colocasia [taro], sweet potatoes, sugar cane, and various vegetables and condiments. The food crops they grow, together with what they gather and the Elaeis palm trees provide them with a continuous and abundant food supply, as long as elephants do [231] not interfere. Their domestic animals include chickens, goats, and 224 dogs. (2) Hunting is a pleasant change of activity rather than an

[177]

2. Ducks have been introduced fairly recently, but they were known long before colonial times. They came from the south. Sheep have been introduced only in the last few decades, and they are found only in a few villages on the river banks in the lowlands.

7:Brow[illegible]4-5 (ca. 1940) 1944 FO32 Mongo FO32 Ntomba

THE *NKUMU* OF THE TUMBA

RITUAL CHIEFTAINSHIP ON THE MIDDLE CONGO

H. D. BROWN

THE tribes living round Lake Tumba, a lake some thirty-five miles long by twelve wide lying north of Lake Leopold II (approximately 0° 30' south latitude, and 18° east longitude) and draining into the Congo River at the confluence of the Ubangi, lack cohesion and show a considerable variety of custom and language. But they are known collectively as Tumba, the Government adaptation of the Native term *Ntomba*. Most of them are found to the east of the lake, the whole group numbering perhaps little more than forty to fifty thousand at the present time, though there is evidence that the last twenty years have seen a great decrease in population. European occupation of this area goes back barely fifty years, Protestant missions having been established for about the same length of time. The first mission post was established at Ikoko on the north-east shore of the lake, one of the villages of a group known as Bongindo. In pursuing this investigation particular attention has been given to the practices of this group, but mention is occasionally made where considerable differences have been found elsewhere.

The Tumba are agricultural, hunting, and fishing people. Their country is flat and swampy with dense forests, and there are many watercourses flowing into Lake Tumba. There are occasional small, low swampy plains, and one such area, more open, with quite wide stretches of prairie, is a haunt of buffalo. The forests are fairly well supplied with game, and the swamps, streams, and lakes with fish. A heavy rainfall and no distinct dry season make agriculture reasonably easy and famine unknown. Every family has its plantation of manioc, the staple diet, which is supplemented by plantains and bananas. The people make their own tools, formerly smelting their own iron for this purpose, are fairly skilful at making dug-out canoes, engage in weaving raffia and making mats out of split cane, and are efficient at pottery production.

The role of the *nkumu* in the socio-religious activities of the community is one of the most interesting features of Tumba life. As a result of European contact the ceremonies connected with the *nkumu* are rapidly disappearing, but it has been possible to collect considerable information from the older men and women among whom the details are still vividly remembered.[1] The following report refers to the period previous to European occupation and control, a time within the memory of a large number of people, but already sufficiently remote to become a matter of history before the lapse of many more years.

An understanding of the place of the *nkumu* among the Tumba requires a glance at the tribal organization. According to the people themselves, they migrated westward, and coming into these parts chose land for themselves. Among the several

[1] In *My Children of the Forest*, New York, 1909, pp. 28–31, Andrew F. Sharpe has briefly outlined some of the forms of initiation observed among the *nkumu* of the district adjacent to that of the present study. These were detailed notes and, however, ideally if a record is to be preserved that opportunity is necessary.

601 Bonsonga and etlikí are terms used for kinship groups of
621 ranks B, C, and D, but occasionally they may also refer to
614 [191] the groups listed under A and, in addition, to the local groups which in size approximately correspond to the kinship units mentioned above. Etlikí is the term used for the oil palm grove and for a certain kind of termite hill; apparently it is used for local groups more frequently than the term bonsonga.

[571] Another term whose meaning varies is ekfindí. This word
[395] designates, first of all, a dance group, a corps de ballet, and also the social unit which sends such a joint dance troupe to dance festivals.

Esé also has strong local connotations. It is usually identical with what we call a village, but frequently units which are larger or smaller than a village are designated as esé. Very large groups, tribes and even larger units, are called bonsonga.

614 As a criterion for placing the individual groups within a certain rank, one or several functions have been chosen in each case. The groups of the individual ranks are described below relative to their functions. On the subject of groups it should be added that in general they do not differ from each other in certain traits. All groups of all ranks are kinship units of patrilineal descent. They consider themselves descendants of one ancestor. No continuous and complete genealogy which can be traced back to the original ancestor is known. The genealogy of the entire group of the Bakonda is shown in Diagram 1.

In Isangi two of the ancestors of the groups of rank D are brothers, the third is the brother of their father. A D-group (Ngolí) includes, in addition, the descendants of an illegitimate child of the paternal sister of the ancestor. These offspring form the C-group, Nsombdafid.

There is a gap between this ancient genealogy and the known ancestors from the recent past. In contrast with that of the neighboring Boloki [Bokote] (see, for example, Boelaert, "Les Bongili"), the genealogical memory of the Ekonda is weak. 1171 It does not reach back to the ancestor of the group of rank A. In this connection we must take into account the fact that a group